

REMARKS

Claims 5-11 and 13 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-4 and 12 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 7, 8, 11 and 13 are amended. Claims 7, 8 and 11 are amended to depend from independent claim 5. Thus, no new matter is added.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because e.g. they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the allowance of claims 5 and 6 over the prior art of record. Applicants submit that all pending claims are allowable for the reasons discussed below.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-3, 7 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by JP63-278353. As claims 1-3 are canceled, the rejection of those claims is moot. Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 7 and 13.

Applicants submit that claim 7 is in condition for allowance as depending from allowed claim 5. Additionally, as claim 13 is amended to incorporate the subject matter indicated as allowable in claim 5, claim 13 is also in condition for allowance, as it is admitted that JP63-278353 does not disclose the features recited therein.

III. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over JP63-278353 in view of U.S. Patent 6,008,914. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants submit that as claims 8-10 depend from allowed claim 5, that claims 8-10 are also in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the rejection of claims 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

Claims 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over JP63-278353 in view of U.S. Patent 5,772,817. As claim 12 is canceled, the rejection of that claim is moot. Applicants traverse the rejection of claim 11.

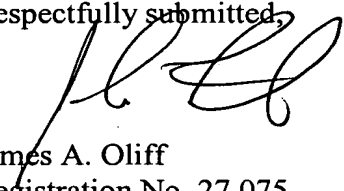
Applicants submit that claim 11 is amended to depend from allowed claim 5. Accordingly, claim 11 is also in condition for allowance. Thus, Applicants respectfully request the rejection of claims 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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